



Service-learning in higher education and the effect on students' diversity views

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Summary

Although online learning is a growing phenomenon in higher education, what is frequently missing in online courses is experiential learning, which allows students to learn the real world application of their studies. An online university international studies course was the basis for a pre-post survey study on diversity views. In this poster, we report study findings, show how findings contribute to the field, and suggest areas of further research.

We conducted descriptive statistical analyses and computed a non-parametric measure of significant differences between two student groups on both the pretest Diversity Views (Santistevan Matthews, Hawken, Burrow-Sánchez, Peterson, & Fields, 2007) survey measures and the posttest measures, using

Kendall's (1955) tau-b for analyzing the individual Likert-type survey items.

We also conducted a non-parametric measure of significant differences between pretest and posttest, independent of group, using PASW to conduct a Wilcoxon signed rank test. Differences and similarities in the students after the service-learning group participated in civic engagement within immigrant and refugee communities are reported.

One interesting pretest difference between groups among other findings was that 77% of non-service-learning students had disagreed with or were neutral about the statement, "Immigrants often do not have much experience with reading and writing and lack experience with school culture and performance expectations in the United States," 55% of service-learning students agreed with the statement before the intervention. One interesting posttest finding after the course intervention was complete showed that all non-service-learning students strongly agreed with the statement, "Children with disabilities should always be included in the general education classroom to the greatest extent possible." While 60% of service-learning student also strongly agreed, 40% marked "agree." Additional survey findings are presented in the poster.

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